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ABSTRACT

The Florida Department of Corrections Distance Learning Program consists of the Corrections Distance Learning Network; offender programming; staff development; and the Agency Strategic Plan. The Corrections Distance Learning Network offers academic, vocational training, and life management skills programs for offenders and staff development and training programs for employees in 48 sites in correctional institutions, regional probation and parole offices, and alternate sites. There are seven two-way conferencing sites. Students in the Model Distance Learning Classroom Project have shown gains in Test for Adult Basic Education scores, and the success rate of students acquiring their GEDs increased. The Lancaster Correctional Institution has piloted SAFETY-NET (Systems Applications For Educating Troubled Youth Network), a technology-based network funded by a Star School Grant. Staff development includes the Distance Learning Applications in Corrections Project that enables employees to take classes toward earning an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree. Possibilities to expand or optimize the Corrections Distance Learning Network include use of Florida Department of Education-licensed programs, Intranet, coordination of broadcast with educational programming, and two-way videoconferencing. (Thirty notes are appended.) (YLB)

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ED 452 357

Florida Department of Corrections' Distance Learning Program

Florida Corrections Commission 1999 Annual Report Section 7

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7. Florida Deaprtment of Corrections' Distance Learning Program

A. Background

Distance learning has been defined as the process of delivering an instructional resource to a location away from the originating site. This is accomplished through the use of video, audio, computer, multimedia communications, or some combination of these with other traditional delivery methods. Distance learning allows lessons to be delivered to or from remote sites to meet the needs of students or employees.[1]

Effectiveness studies of distance learning have been consistent in showing that when used in business, military training, and adult learning, there is no significant difference in success rates between distance learning and traditional instruction methods. Student attitudes are generally positive about the experience.[2]

Appendix 7.1 provides a brief glossary of distance learning terms used in this section.

1. Corrections Distance Learning Network

In 1995, the Florida Distance Learning Network, governed by a board of directors, was created by statute (Laws of Florida 95-403). The board was to advise and assist the Florida Department of Education in carrying out its duties relating to distance learning throughout the state. For the most part, the board of directors had been inactive for several years. In 1999, the Florida Legislature passed HB-2123 (Laws of Florida, Chapter 99-394), replacing the board with the Florida Distance Learning Network Advisory Council. The Council is to assume the board's responsibilities and is currently in the process of organizing.

For Fiscal Year 1994-95, the Florida Legislature appropriated $650,000 to establish the Corrections Distance Learning Network. Of that total, $400,000 was a lump sum appropriation from General Revenue for satellite telecommunication links. The remaining $250,000 came from the Inmate Welfare Trust Fund to be used to

> provide instructional support service for educational distance learning programs for state correctional facilities.
>
> Programs shall include instructional educational programs for inmates and in-service instructional programs.[3]

This appropriation provided the equipment for 35 sites, including downlinks to 3 regional offices and 4 two-way videoconferencing systems. Since that time, although no special

funding has been appropriated, the department has added 13 satellite downlinks, all at correctional institutions, and 3 more videoconferencing systems at regional offices.

The Corrections Distance Learning Network is organizationally located in the Bureau of Workforce Development and Distance Education, Office of Program Services. The network offers:

- Educational programs for offenders
    - academic
    - vocational training
    - life management skills
- Staff development and training programs for employees[4]

2. Offender Programming

a. Model Distance Learning Classroom Project

A pilot program, the Model Distance Learning Classroom Project, was introduced at Taylor Correctional Institution and Okeechobee CI in the fall of 1998. According to the department

the purpose of the program is to determine if a fully interactive videoconferencing distance learning delivery model combined with comprehensive service provides equal to or superior instructional outcome results compared to traditional instructional design and support services.[5]

Two General Education Development preparation classes were taught for twelve weeks, five days per week, three hours per day. The program used two-way videoconferencing to teach fully interactive classes to offenders in these facilities from the central office electronic classroom. In the spring of 1999, Adult Basic Education classes were added.

The pilot program had closed entry classes; most General Education Development classes are open entry. Inmates were screened before being granted admittance to this program. If an offender left the program, he had to start over at the beginning if he returned.

b. Star Schools Grants

The Star Schools program, operated by the Office of Educational Research, U.S. Department of Education, was created to "improve instruction to underserved populations through the use of telecommunications." The Florida Department of Corrections co-wrote a Star Schools grant proposal with the Texas Youth Commission and the New York Department of Children and Family Services targeting juvenile and youthful offenders. A grant of $10 million -- the first Star Schools grant to include correctional educational entities -- was awarded in August 1997. Funds from the grant are distributed at $2 million a year for five years. The partnership between the three participating state agencies is known as the Justice Distance Learning Consortium.[6]

The consortium developed and supports a technology-based network, SAFETY-NET (Systems Applications For Educating Troubled Youth Network), to service both juvenile and youthful offenders and their teaching staff. The goals of SAFETY-NET are to:

- develop a working consortium for program development and network implementation to maximize the limited resources in the member states
- increase access to quality educational programs for incarcerated youth
- increase access to quality professional development programs for faculty/staff
- support and facilitate forums for correctional educators to collaborate and share information on successful programs, instructional strategies, and other issues
- promote and support the utilization of technology in staff development programs
- enhance and expand use of previously developed Star Schools and other programs for use with this particular population
- provide evaluative information on the efficacy of using technology-based curriculum to meet the special needs of the juvenile offender populations and the educators who serve them[7]

Recently, the Florida Department of Corrections was awarded another Star School Grant in partnership with Washington State. This grant is for $9.2 million over five years. The project will pilot the Corrections Learning Network in Florida and Washington State and place special focus on the specific needs of adults in correctional facilities, such as victim empathy, wellness education, anger management, and other areas of education. Like the Star Schools project for youthful offenders, this consortium will provide technology-based, interactive instructional programming to incarcerated adults, professional development for educators, and technology systems enhancements for both groups. A third party will evaluate the teaching and learning components to measure the project's effectiveness.[8]

Both SAFETY-NET and the Corrections Learning Network are intended as pilot projects. After the programs are fully developed and evaluated, the networks will be disseminated nationally.

3. Staff Development

In the Department of Corrections, the Bureau of Staff Development is responsible for the design, delivery, and management of the department's statewide employee training, including orientation, supervisory, management, mandatory, advanced, and specialized training, in addition to basic recruit training for correctional officers and correctional probation officers. Also, the bureau has responsibility for the oversight of the training centers around the state and ensuring the department complies with the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission's requirements.

The department is undergoing reorganization at this time. Prior to reorganization, the various bureaus would develop their own programming, or use courses developed by the

National Institute on Corrections, for example, and coordinate with the Corrections Distance Learning Network for time on the network. Often this staff training would be used to introduce new rules or regulations or medical procedure protocols. Appendix 7.2 lists the staff development courses broadcast from FY 1995-96 to FY 1997-98. During that period, over 60 courses and approximately 160 hours of instruction were delivered.

The Department of Corrections has installed NT LAN (New Technology Local Area Network) servers at almost 100 locations including correctional institutions, regional offices, and community corrections centers. These servers provide access to the department's intranet site, which could also be used for the delivery of distance education.

a. Continuing Education

According to section 943.135, Florida Statutes, continuing education or training for certified law enforcement, correctional, and correctional probation officers is required at the rate of 40 hours every four years. According to the American Corrections Association standards, each organization within a department of corrections will have different and varying training needs. Appendix 7.3 lists the American Corrections Association standards and the department's training requirements.[9]

In July 1999, the Bureau of Staff Development reviewed all "regulatory guidelines, laws, organizational mandates, and American Corrections Association standards that encompass approximately 330 job classifications for over 26,000 . . . employees, volunteer and contract staff" in order to revise the *Mandatory Training Handbook*.[10] Of the 40 hours of annual training required by the department, 32 hours of instruction for correctional officers are on mandatory topics and 26 hours are on mandatory topics for all other employees. The Mandatory Topics taught during orientation are noted in Appendix 7.4 .

b. Post-Secondary Education

There are salary incentives available to correctional officers for furthering their education. Correctional officers can earn $30 per month for completing an associate degree and $80 per month for a baccalaureate degree. Correctional probation officers are required to have a baccalaureate degree, and are therefore not eligible for these incentives.

4. Department of Corrections' Agency Strategic Plan

In the Department of Corrections' *Agency Strategic Plan for 1999-2004*, the Corrections Distance Learning Network meets two critical needs of the department:

- efficient and cost-effective educational services for offenders both incarcerated and supervised
- centralized support for staff development and training

The primary purpose of the Corrections Distance Learning Network is to provide an effective and efficient means to complement institutional inmate education programs.[11]

Under Issue 2 - Enhance the ability of inmates and offenders to become productive

members of society, Objective 2-2.3 is to

> increase to an 84.5% success rate the inmates who complete academic programs and are not recommitted within 24 months from the baseline rate of 82% (FY 1993-94) by June, 2004 *[see Table 7-A]*.[12]

Table 7-A

Florida Department of Corrections'
Projected Percentage of Inmates Completing Academic Programs
Who are not Recommitted Within 24 Months of Release
FY 1999-00 through FY 2003-04

Projection Table				
FY 99-00	FY 00-01	FY 01-02	FY 02-03	FY 03-04
82.5%	83.0%	83.5%	84.0%	84.5%

Source: Agency Strategic Plan for 1999-2004, Florida Department of Corrections

Strategy C is to

> integrate distance-learning, multi-media, and other technology into inmate programs and staff development.

B. Findings

1. Corrections Distance Learning Network

Today, the Florida Corrections Distance Learning Network consists of 48 sites located at 33 correctional institutions, 5 regional probation and parole offices, and 5 alternate sites. There are also 7 two-way videoconferencing sites. The network operates on a base budget of approximately $250,000 a year. Satellite time must be purchased from WFSU/The Florida Channel on the state's satellite transponder, which is a KU-Band transponder with digital capability. Rates vary from $450 per hour for the full transponder, $300 for a half transponder, and $150 for a digital channel on a half responder. Usually, a half transponder or a digital channel is used. Also, time from commercial vendors can be purchased at rates of approximately $450 - $550 per hour. Other expenses include the service contract and the costs of relocating equipment. The department hopes to move from analog to digital transmission, which would save time and cost less to transmit, in the near future.[13]

The department shares the Corrections Distance Learning Network with other interested state agencies. To date, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor and Employment Security, and Florida State University have used the network, averaging approximately once a quarter. Under the Secretary's direction, state agencies are not charged for using the equipment.[14]

Corrections Distance Learning Network staff assist other bureaus and offices within the

department in developing, acquiring, and adapting programs and initiatives for use on the network. They provide training and consultation to take full advantage of the effectiveness of programs developed through grants, proposals, and other projects.[15]

Individual bureaus and offices in the Department of Corrections collect and retain evaluations and surveys on the effectiveness of using distance learning technologies. Correction Distance Learning Network staff then assists in modifying and restructuring programs to improve the usefulness and approval of these courses.[16]

As use of the network increases, the Office of Program Services is currently drafting policies and procedures to ensure the efficient delivery of programming over the network. As a guide in the development of these policies and procedures, staff has ranked, in order of importance, the following areas:

- adult basic education to inmates
- staff training to instructional staff to support inmate education
- staff training and program development in related areas such as health services, substance abuse, and transition
- collaboration with other agencies where mutual use of distance learning resources is beneficial, such as Department of Education's Workforce Development Office and the national DADS project on effective parenting[17]

The Office of Program Services reported recent changes initiated to enhance maximization of the Corrections Distance Learning Network:

- using grant funds, a satellite uplink coordinator was added to the staff for scheduling and coordination of all satellite programming
- upgraded digital satellite receivers to state-of-the-art capability
- currently evaluating the use of fiber optic lines to deliver programming to satellite uplink, which is a more secure mode with greater signal capacity[18]

2. Offender Programming

a. Current Status

Offender programming over the Corrections Distance Learning Network began in FY 1996-97. "GED on TV," a series of 43 half-hour programs produced by Kentucky Educational TV, was broadcast for eleven weeks beginning in April 1996. The series was delivered by satellite to twenty institutions. "GED on TV" was continued in FY 1997-98.

Most distance learning materials, such as instructional CDs and tapes, are purchased at the institutional level. Examples of this type of instruction include courses in transitional skills and anger reduction. Inmates may also enroll in correspondence courses, which are paid for privately by the inmates.

Individual institutions can, and have, bought satellite dish equipment and services from local providers. This equipment is primarily used for disaster preparedness such as weather and emergency services updates.

Distance learning for offenders at the Probation and Parole offices typically consists of transitional programs on videotape.

Appendix 7.5 details the offender programs that have been presented through the Corrections Distance Learning Network from FY 1996-97 to date.

According to the department, distance learning increases efficiency and cost savings in the delivery of educational programs to inmates by reaching greater numbers of inmates in a shorter time, providing institutions with taped programs for future use, and reducing the costs associated with instructors and programs.[19]

b. Model Distance Learning Classroom Project

Table 7-B summarizes the gains in Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores for the inmates that participated in the Model Distance Learning Classroom Project at Okeechobee CI and Taylor CI. On average, the students raised their TABE scores 1.2 grade levels in the twelve to fifteen weeks that they were enrolled in the program. (See Appendix 7.6 for all pre-TABE and post-TABE scores.)[20]

Table 7-B

Florida Model Distance Learning Classroom
Grade Analysis for GED and ABE Classes
Fall 1998 – Fall 1999

Class	Number of Inmates Enrolled	Number of Inmates that Finished	Average Gain in TABE Score
Fall 1998 GED	39	35	1.7
Spring 1999 GED	52	40	1.0
Spring 1999 ABE	39	31	1.3
Summer 1999 GED	38	31	1.4
Summer 1999 ABE	34	30	0.7
Total	202	167	1.2 (avg.)

Source: Office of Program Services, Florida Department of Corrections, adapted by Commission staff

Surveys on the Model Distance Learning Classroom reported high acceptance by staff and students and an increased success rate of students acquiring their GEDs. Prior to FY

1999-2000, the department did not separate GED and ABE enrollments and therefore could not give accurate measures of the rise in test scores for inmates in traditional GED or ABE classes. That information will be available in July 2000.[21]

The program was discontinued on September 23, 1999. To be fully cost-effective, the Model Distance Learning Classroom Project must be used in at least six institutions. The department requested $225,000 in both their FY 1998-99 and FY 1999-00 Legislative Budget Requests to expand the project into four additional institutions, but the project was not funded. The issue is not included in the FY 2000-01 Legislative Budget Request. Until adequate funding is appropriated, the equipment remains at Taylor CI and Okeechobee CI and will be used to support teacher training in all curriculum areas and the Star Schools grant for adult learners (see below).[22]

c. Star Schools Grant

During the first two operating years of the Star School grant, the affiliated states:

- hired staff
- formed the Justice Distance Learning Consortium
- developed new instruction or re-purposed previously developed materials for use with juvenile offenders
- tested the various curricula
- trained teachers and staff
- purchased and installed the necessary computer and satellite equipment

As they enter their third year, the consortium hopes to begin full implementation of the SAFTEY-NET program. An explanation of how the technology is employed in the SAFTEY-NET is found in Appendix 7.7.

Funds from the Star School grant are distributed proportionally among the partner states. Florida receives $293,000 annually: $110,000 for technology purchases and the remainder for salaries, in-state travel, and other expenses. The consortium also has a budget for items such as out-of-state travel.

Lancaster CI was chosen as the pilot site in Florida. Preliminary testing there showed that students benefit from the interactive learning experience. When the program is fully implemented in Florida, it will be in use in seven youthful offender facilities (Brevard CI, Hendry CI, Hernando CI, Hillsborough CI, Indian River CI, Lancaster CI, and Sumter Boot Camp) and serve approximately 150 teachers and 2,000 students.

Commission staff observed samples of the programming offered over the satellite network and the pilot site at Lancaster CI. Until the computer equipment is installed at the youthful offender institutions, instructors can videotape programs from the satellite downlink to be used in their classrooms. (The satellite equipment at the institutions was purchased as part

of the Corrections Distance Learning Network and was in place prior to the installation of the SAFETY-NET.) Courses available to both students and educators for fall 1999 are cataloged in Appendix 7.8. The institutions have access to programs on CD-ROM that have been purchased by the department and often re-purposed for use in the correctional setting. Some original curriculum developed by Justice Distance Learning Consortium is also being tested. When the system is fully operationally, the programs purchased or developed by the Justice Distance Learning Consortium will be loaded on the server at each institution so that any number of students can access the same program at the same time. Currently, the programs are available on CD-ROM, limiting their use to the number of copies available.

At Lancaster CI, there are ten computer stations installed, with the monitors and computers mounted under the table and below a plate of Plexiglas. This arrangement allows the instructor an unobstructed view of the students' activities. The lessons are self-paced; the instructor monitors each student's lesson plan and progress. Approximately 20 students are enrolled in four two-hour classes, for a total of 80 students participating every day. Half of the students in each class are assigned to the SAFETY-NET on alternate days, while their classmates work with the older computer equipment and lessons. From a central computer, the instructor is able to monitor the individual inmates as they study to make certain that they are working and using the programs appropriately. On the day Commission staff visited, the education staff expressed great optimism for the program and noted that the students are far more interested in the new programming and spend more time engaged in the lessons.

Researchers and practitioners stress that distance learning will never be a substitute for having teachers and facilitators in the classroom. The education staff at Lancaster CI affirmed the need for a full-time teacher's aid to realize the full potential of the program.

d. Other Programming

According to the department, one major problem for correctional distance education is a lack of programming for the incarcerated population. Most of what is done in distance learning is at the post-secondary level. The department acquires appropriate programming by developing it in-house, contracting out development, or by purchasing existing programs.

Appropriate vocational programming for distance learning is also difficult to find. This type of instruction often requires hands-on experience.

3. Staff Development

In the past, there was no standardized training for correctional staff. Today, the number one priority for Staff Development is to standardize this training.

Table 7-C shows the department's estimated savings using the Corrections Distance Learning Network for meetings and training sessions. (Inmate training numbers are included in the 1998 and 1999 hours.) These savings are consistent with other studies that found that distance education is characterized by high start-up costs and low variable costs. Once the initial start-up costs are amortized, significant savings can be realized from

reductions in travel and lost productivity time for workers traveling to a training site.[23]

Table 7-C

Estimated Savings Using the Florida Corrections Distance Learning Network (CDLN) Calendar Years 1996-1999

Year	No. of Events	No. of Participants	No. of Hours	Traditional Cost	CDLN Cost	Estimated Savings
1996	33	4,600	125	$644,000	$69,000	$575,000
1997	50	5,300	110	$742,000	$79,500	$662,500
1998	74	5,500	235	$770,000	$82,500	$687,500
1/1/99 to 6/1/99	35	1,800	396	$252,000	$27,000	$225,000
Total	192	17,200	866	$2,408,000	$258,000	$2,150,000

NOTE: Estimates are based on the following information provided by the Department of Management Services: 20 persons traveling out of town for a 1 day meeting/training costs approximately $140 per person if half fly, half drive and half stay overnight. The same meeting/training conducted over the Corrections Distance Learning Network costs an average of $15 per person.
Source: Office of Program Services, Florida Department of Corrections

The Corrections Distance Learning Network initially cost $650,000. This amount was recouped in savings within eighteen months. An additional $400,000 was spent over the last three years with those expenses being recovered by January 1, 1998.

Post-Secondary Education

In 1995, with a $755,859 grant from the Florida Board of Regents, the Distance Learning Applications in Corrections Project began as a partnership between the Department of Corrections, St. Petersburg Junior College, and Florida Gulf Coast University. This program enables department employees to take classes towards earning an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree. At the time, the department believed that "making a range of training and college educational opportunities available to its employees would assist with the recruitment, retention and promotion of employees."[24] The current educational system had difficulty meeting the needs of the department's employees. Many correctional institutions are located in areas of the state remote to colleges and universities. These facilities function 24-hour hours a day, seven days a week, preventing the flexibility needed to attend a traditional campus.[25]

The program at St. Petersburg Junior College was piloted in Region V beginning in fall 1996 and was offered statewide in fall 1997. Through St. Petersburg Junior College, students can complete all course work for an associate of arts degree in the distance format. Also, the college awards credit for the completion of the Florida Certified Academy and passing the Florida State Certification Exam that can be used towards an associate of science degree in Criminal Justice. Currently, department employees enrolled in this program are taught via videotapes sent to them individually. Books and other materials are purchased through the college's bookstore; a designated purchasing agent is assigned to assist distance learning students. Students must take proctored mid-term and final exams within specified times. Over the past year, over 60 Department of Corrections employees were enrolled in this program each semester, with two receiving their associate of arts

degrees.

The partnership with Florida Gulf Coast University allows for a "2+2" concept where students take the first two years through St. Petersburg Junior College and transfer to the university for their final two years. As a distance option, Florida Gulf Coast University offers the upper division undergraduate courses required to complete a bachelor of science degree in Criminal Justice or Health Services and graduate courses necessary to complete a master's degree in Business Administration, Public Administration, Health Science, or Curriculum and Instruction: Educational Technology. Since 1997, the university has registered approximately 20 students in the Criminal Justice and Master's of Public Administration program each semester. Students are enrolled from 21 correctional institutions, probation and parole offices, and regional or central offices. Florida Gulf Coast University graduated the first Distance Learning student in May 1999 from the Florida Parole Commission in Tallahassee.[26]

The program partners noted two areas that are critical to the success of the endeavor. First, letting employees know that the program exists. Today, most employees learn of the program through word-of-mouth. Recommendations from a 1997 evaluation of the project included mounting a promotional campaign to inform wardens, training officers, and local correctional employees of the program's goals and benefits. Secondly, many distance learning students require strong local support to become skilled at learning in this new environment. The most successful students have had a "mentor" -- an employee at their local facility or office who is an educator or has been through college and can answer their questions in a timely manner.[27]

Another component of the partnership was the development of five in-service training modules. Professional curriculum writers developed the training materials and assisted in the filming of the training videos on work squad supervision, outside escort, count procedures, and search procedures -- person searches and non-person searches.[28]

The department canceled the contract for the partnership due to financial considerations. However, both schools still offer their programs to department employees through an informal agreement. Currently, there is no contact person at the central office for the college, university, or students.

4. Department of Corrections' Agency Strategic Plan

The Corrections Distance Learning Network "supports and maintains a delivery and production infrastructure to complement instructional and staff training services." As such, the network, working under current Legislative Budget Request measures, serves as a useful tool in the department's overall strategic plan to:

- deliver Adult Basic Education, GED, and Literacy programs to the target population
- provide support for delivery of instructional staff training and continuing education programs critical to the teaching staff as required by most state and federal programs
- support other critical training issues including various staff development training programs for offices and bureaus

- support other state agencies in providing training in critical needs areas through shared resources by providing production and broadcast services
- provide support and assistance to the Justice Distance Learning Consortium initiative, the Corrections Learning Network, and other partnerships as developed
- provide support and consultant services to the development of programs such as motivational, anger and violence reduction, and job skills programs
- support pilot initiatives such as the Model Distance Learning Classroom project and other creative methods to provide for the critical needs for our target populations[29]

According to the agency's strategic plan, the top priority for the Corrections Distance Learning Network is offender programming. However, the way it has developed, it has been more successful for staff development. Nevertheless, for the offender programming that has been done, it has been successful.

5. Future Plans

According to the department, possibilities to expand or optimize the Corrections Distance Learning Network include:

- Use of the Florida Department of Education-licensed programs such as:
  - Teach an Adult to Read – a literacy tutor training program
  - Learn to Read – a literacy series for adults
  - Math Basics – a basic math skills series
  - Workplace Essential Skills - a series to develop skills for transition into the workplace
  - TEAMS Distance Learning Programs – reading, math, science, and social studies basics[30]
- Intranet – this would require an automated service system. A server at each institution would be activated to record programming. This type of system requires a good deal of coordination. Although firewalls would be put in place, inmates would have access to the Internet on this system. An Intranet could be cost-prohibitive.
- Coordinate broadcast with educational programming that is already offered, such as "GED on TV."
- Two-way videoconferencing similar to the pilot project at Taylor CI and Okeechobee CI. Two-way videoconferencing ($35,000) is more expensive than a satellite downlink ($6-8,000). The system is currently in the regional offices and central office.

All of these proposals need adjustments to work well in the correctional environment. Scheduling can be a problem. Also, a staff member is needed to operate the system and

act as a facilitator.

C. Recommendations

Since the launch of the Corrections Distance Learning Network in 1995, the Department of Corrections has explored and tested several innovative initiatives, such as the Model Distance Learning Classroom Project and the Justice Distance Learning Consortium, to enhance the delivery of educational programs to inmates. The Commission applauds these efforts and offers the following recommendations as its endorsement of the department's plans to expand these programs.

1. **The Department of Corrections should continue to expand the use of the Corrections Distance Learning Network to increase the efficiency and cost savings in the delivery of offender programming and staff training.**

2. **The Department of Corrections should direct its efforts in offender educational program development to the distance learning model.**

3. **The Department of Corrections should seek funding to establish the Model Distance Learning Classroom in six institutions in order to make the project cost-effective.**

4. **The Department of Corrections should provide sufficient teacher aide positions to realize the full potential of the SAFETY-NET and other distance learning initiatives.**

5. **The Department of Corrections should designate a contact person in the Central Office for the Distance Learning Applications in Corrections Project with St. Petersburg Junior College and Florida Gulf Coast University to respond to student-employee information needs and to promote the program.**

6. **The Legislature should adequately fund the expansion of the Corrections Distance Learning Network.**

These recommendations support the Department of Corrections' mission by preparing offenders for re-entry into society and developing a professional staff.

Lead Analyst: Robbie A. Bouplon

Notes on Section 7

[1] Instructional Telecommunications Council, "Some Definitions of Distance Education," Distance Education Clearinghouse, http://www.uwex.edu/disted/definition.html (July 1, 1999); "Distance Learning & Training Definition," Advanced Concepts Training for Educators, South Central Regional Technology in Education Consortium, http://scrtec.org/act/Feb23/faculty/dietrich/distance/tsld003.htm (July 1, 1999).

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[3] Florida House Committee on Appropriations and Senate Committee on Appropriations, *General Appropriations Acts and Summary Statement of Intent for Fiscal Year 1994-95* (May 6, 1994): 87.

[4] Florida Department of Corrections, 97-98 Agency Annual Report, Education and Job Training Florida - Corrections Distance Learning Network (CDLN), http://www.dc.state.fl.us/executive/research/annual/9798/cdln.html (February 15, 1999).

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[6] U.S. Department of Education, Star Schools – What is the Star Schools Program, http://www.ed.gov/prog_info/StarSchools/whatis.html (September 23, 1999); The Justice Distance Learning Consortium, SAFETY-NET, About Us: Welcome, http://www.safety-net.org/aumain.html (November 17, 1999).

[7] SAFETY-NET.

[8] U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Star Schools Awards, http://www.ed.gov/prog_info/StarSChools/99starschoolawards.html (September 23, 1999).

[9] Florida Department of Corrections, Bureau of Staff Development, *Mandatory Training Handbook Training Year 1999-2000* (July 1999): 6.

[10] Ibid., 7.

[11] Florida Department of Corrections, 1999-2004 Agency Strategic Plan, http://www.dc.state.fl.us/executive/execdev/asp/19992004/goal2-2.html (July 7, 1999).

[12] Ibid.

[13] Memorandum from Wilson C. Bell, Office of Program Services, Florida Department of Corrections, to Florida Corrections Commission staff, dated October 11, 1999.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Florida Department of Corrections, Office of Program Services, *Response to Florida Corrections Commission Annual Report* (November 3, 1999).

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Bell memorandum.

[21] *Response to Florida Corrections Commission*; Bell memorandum.

[22] Bell memorandum; e-mail message from William Wooley, Office of Program Services, Florida Department of Corrections, to Florida Corrections Commission staff, dated November 18, 1999.

[23] Berry, 9-10.

[24] Ibid., 1.

[25] E-mail from Dr. Kathleen Davey, Florida Gulf Coast University, to Florida Corrections Commission staff, dated October 4, 1999; Berry, 1-2.

[26] Berry, 2; Florida Gulf Coast University, *Distance Learning A Guidebook for Students* (brochure): 5; e-mail from Peggy Bradley, Distance Learning Coordinator, Florida Gulf Coast University, to Florida Corrections Commission staff, dated September 30, 1999.

[27] Berry, 31-32.

[28] Ibid., 4.

[29] *Response to Florida Corrections Commission*.

[30] Ibid.

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